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DANCING ELEPHANT PRESS



BRITAIN'S GREATEST HERO!

JACK STAFF

7
OCT

★ IN THIS ISSUE ★

BECKY BURDOCK VAMPIRE REPORTER

THE SPIDER

AND INTRODUCING

A MAN OF SHADOW

Personal Appearances 2002

Comics Mart 2002 - Sunday 17th Feb - Midday - 4pm - Jury's Hotel Bristol

COMICS 2002 - 1st and 2nd June - The Commonwealth Museum, Bristol (next to the Temple Meads Rail Station) - all the usual comics mayhem now under one roof!



FLAG WAVING

Well, that's *one* way of getting post. Thanks to everyone who took the time to write in response to my 'Important Announcement' last issue. I do want to emphasise that Kane will be continuing in 2003 and in the meantime I'm going to be releasing the remaining issues (19 - 31) in four Trade Paperbacks during 2002, the first scheduled for March.

In the meantime all the books, comic, T-shirts and caps are still available -

Greetings from New Eden (Kane 1 - 4)
$13.45 US £6.95 UK £9.00 Europe
Rabbit Hunt (Kane 5 - 8)
$14.00 US £6.95 UK £9.00 Europe
Histories (Kane 9 - 12)
$14.00 US £6.95 UK £9.00 Europe
Thirty Ninth (Kane 13 - 18)
$21.50 US £9.95 UK £12.00 Europe

Single issues are also available - Kane 19 - 22 at $3.50 US, £1.80 UK and £2.50 Europe. Kane 23 - 26 and 27 - 31 at $2.95 US, £1.80 UK and £2.50 Europe. Kane 27 was a double sized issue at $5.00 US, £3.00 UK and £4.50 Europe. US orders please add $1.50 US to total for postage. Cheques payable to Paul Grist. Go on, treat yourself for Christmas!

And in case you've got any money left in the New Year, there's always the first Jack Staff book, Yesterday's Heroes, collecting issues 1 - 4 of the series for a mere $15.95 US/£8.95 UK. Order your copy now!

For those of you looking for a little bit more grist in your diet, let me point you in the direction of the recent Harley Quinn: Worlds at War Special, for which I drew a 9 page sequence. The main reason being that it gave me a chance to do Jimmy Olsen. There's also a Batman Black and White story I've written which has just appeared in Gotham Knights issue 23. Haven't seen it yet, but the strongest thing to recommend it is that it's drawn by Darwyn Cooke.

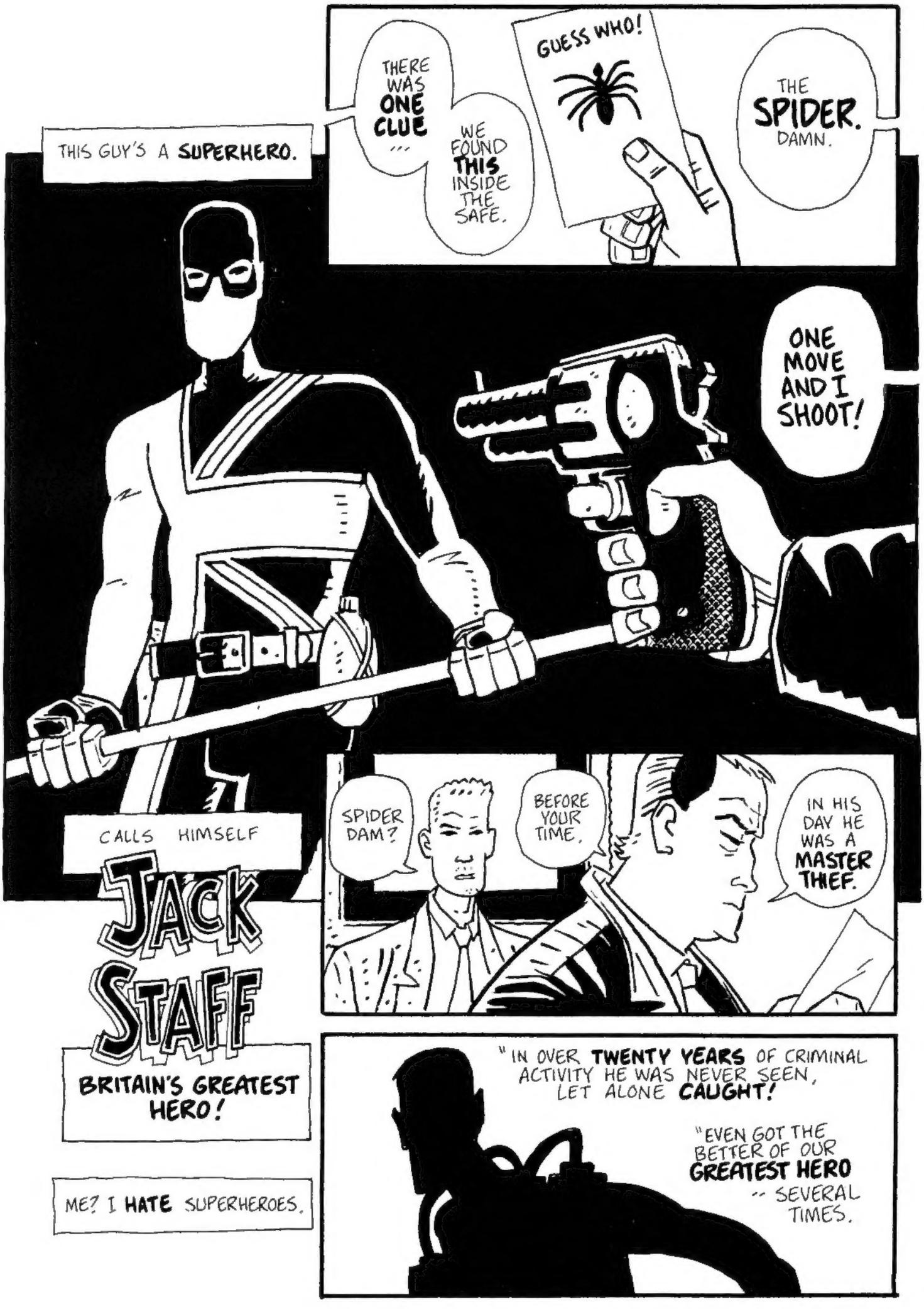
That's the end of the commercial break, we now return you to our main feature...



JACK STAFF 7, October 2001. Published by DANCING ELEPHANT PRESS, P.O. Box 2362, Wells, BA5 1YQ, England. All contents copyright 2001 Paul Grist. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. No part of this comic may be reproduced, except for review, without written permission from Paul Grist. Printed by YBE Business Forms, Rotherham.

MAVERYK


THEY CALL ME DETECTIVE INSPECTOR MAVERYK.
I'M WHAT THEY CALL AN OLD-FASHIONED COPPER.
OY! CHUMMY!
THAT'S FAR ENOUGH!
THAT MEANS I'M THE BLOKE THEY CALL IN WHEN THEY NEED A JOB DOING AND THEY'RE NOT TOO FUSSY ABOUT HOW IT'S DONE.
OKAY 'ZIPPER' WHAT HAPPENED HERE?
IT'S THE SAME M.O. AS BEFORE GUV.
NO SIGN OF ANY BREAK IN.
THE SAFE WAS PULLED OPEN BY BRUTE STRENGTH ALONE.
INTRODUCING
MAVERYK'S ★NEW★ PARTNER!
DETECTIVE SGT. 'ZIPPER' NOLAN
ONLY THIS TIME THINGS GOT A LITTLE NASTY.
SEEMS OUR MYSTERY INTRUDER WAS SUPRISED BY THE OWNER.
SO HE SHOT HIM.
HE'S NOT EXPECTED TO LAST THE NIGHT.


THERE WAS ONE CLUE ...
WE FOUND THIS INSIDE THE SAFE.
GUESS WHO!
THE SPIDER. DAMN.
THIS GUY'S A SUPERHERO.
ONE MOVE AND I SHOOT!
CALLS HIMSELF
JACK STAFF
BRITAIN'S GREATEST HERO!
SPIDER DAM?
BEFORE YOUR TIME.
IN HIS DAY HE WAS A MASTER THIEF.
"IN OVER TWENTY YEARS OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY HE WAS NEVER SEEN, LET ALONE CAUGHT!
"EVEN GOT THE BETTER OF OUR GREATEST HERO -- SEVERAL TIMES.
ME? I HATE SUPERHEROES.


WHO SAID THAT THEY CAN JUST DETAIN AND QUESTION SUSPECTS WITHOUT REGARD FOR DUE PROCEDURE?
WHAT RIGHT DO THEY HAVE TO THREATEN OR BEAT UP SUSPECTS WITHOUT CONCERN FOR THE SUSPECT'S RIGHTS AS ESTABLISHED IN LAW?
WHY SHOULD THEY BE ALLOWED TO CAUSE RANDOM DAMAGE TO PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROPERTY?
CALL THEM SUPERHEROES?
THEY'RE NOTHING MORE THAN SELF SERVING VIGILANTE THUGS.
"IT SEEMED THE MORE WE TRIED TO CATCH HIM, THE MORE HE LIKED IT.
"IT WAS LIKE A GAME TO HIM.
"WELL HE'S PICKED THE WRONG PERSON TO PLAY GAMES WITH THIS TIME."
I CHEAT.
BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!
AH--
WHAT THE HELL.
LITTLE OLD FOR A DOLLS HOUSE AREN'T YOU SIR?
JUST GOING OVER THE LAYOUT OF OUR LITTLE TRAP.


THAT'S WHY I'M GOING TO STOP HIM.
EVEN IF I HAVE TO DETAIN AND QUESTION SUSPECTS WITHOUT REGARD FOR DUE PROCEDURE.
OR THREATEN THEM, OR BEAT THEM UP, WITHOUT CONCERN FOR THEIR RIGHTS AS ESTABLISHED IN LAW.
I DON'T CARE HOW MUCH RANDOM DAMAGE IS CAUSED TO PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROPERTY.
WHATEVER IT TAKES.
BECAUSE THAT'S MY JOB.
WELL I'VE BEEN GOING OVER THE OLD FILES OF THE SPIDERS 'ACTIVITIES' ...
DID YOU KNOW THAT THE LAST CRIME HE IS BELIEVED TO HAVE CARRIED OUT WAS TWENTY YEARS AGO.
SO?
ABOUT TWO MONTHS BEFORE JACK STAFF DROPPED OFF THE RADAR.
NOW JACK'S BACK AGAIN AND OUT CRAWLS THE SPIDER.
MAKES YOU THINK, DOESN'T IT?
INSPECTOR MAVERYK? WE'VE GOT TWO TARGETS ON SITE!
OKAY. LET'S DO IT.

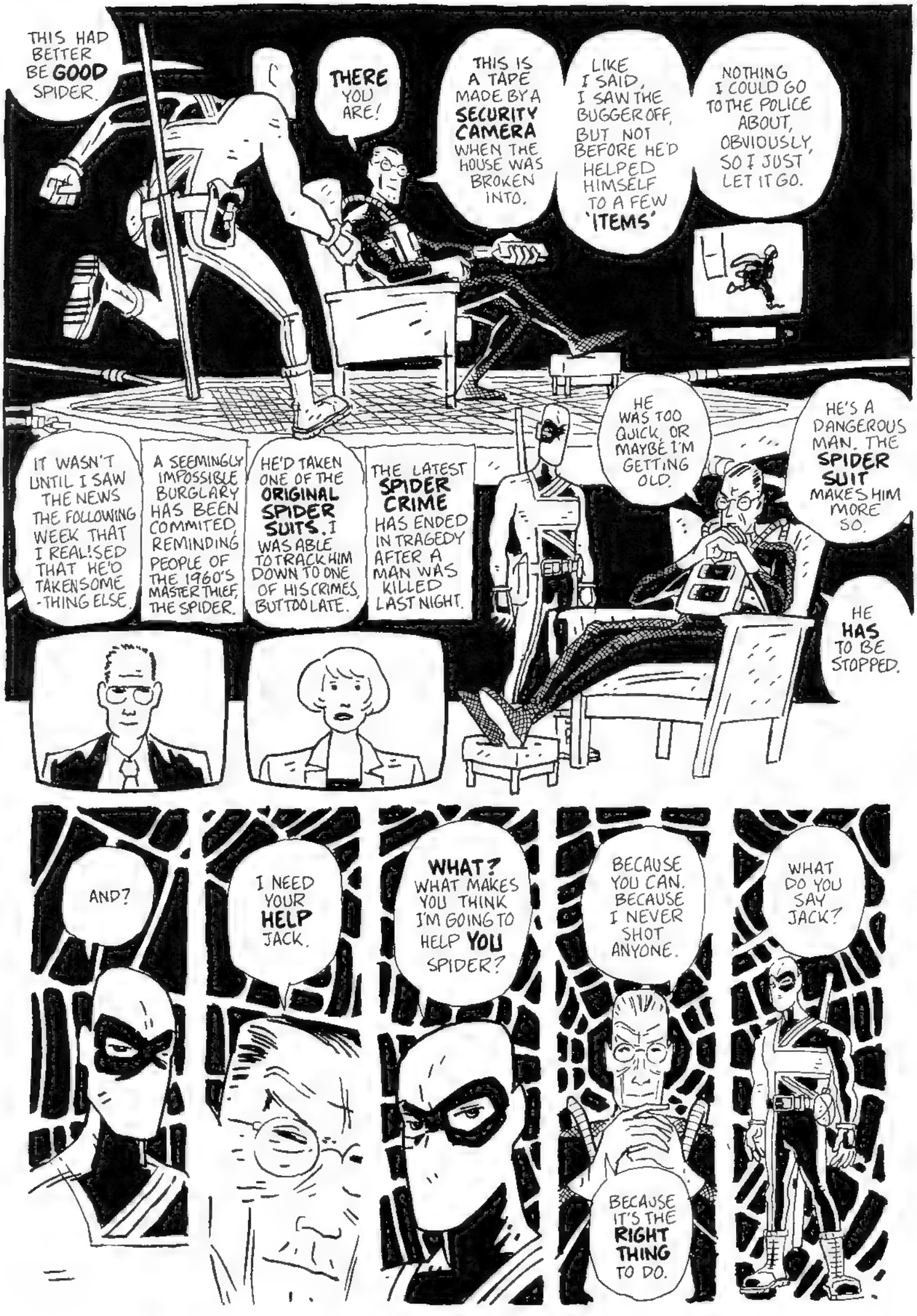

THEY'RE CALLED THE
HOUNDS of HELL
SNIFF
SNIFF
SNIFF
-- AND THEY'RE HUNTING
BECKY BURDOCK
VAMPIRE REPORTER
WE'RE QUITE PLAYFUL REALLY!
YEAH sniff sniff
WE LIKE PLAYING WITH OUR FOOD!
OVER THERE!
THAT WAY!
I'M THE ONE WITH THE NOSE, RIGHT?
SMELLS ARE MY SPECIALITY UNDER STAND?
NOT SO FAST eh?
LET'S JUST ESTABLISH A FEW GROUND RULES HERE.
IN MATTERS OF SCENT YOU'RE JUST A SNIFFER-- I'M THE SMELLER!
OKAY! OKAY!
YOU'RE THE SMELLIEST OF ALL!
ALL HAIL THE GREAT SMELLY ONE!
YOU KNOW IT'S SO TRUE.


WHAT I DO KNOW IS WE WOULDN'T HAVE TO BE RUNNING ROUND HERE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT IF YOU HADN'T LET GO OF HER LEG!
I DIDN'T LET GO - SHE JUST TURNED HER LEG TO MIST!
NOBODY TOLD ME SHE COULD DO THAT!
SHE'S A VAMPIRE!
WHAT DID YOU THINK SHE WOULD DO?
VAMPIRE?
REALLY?
"REALLY?"
OF COURSE SHE'S A VAMPIRE!
WELL I'VE MET SOME VAMPIRES IN MY TIME
AND LET ME TELL YOU, THAT LADY
..mmnuph..
FASCINATING AS THIS DISCUSSION MAY BE LADS ...
PERHAPS WE COULD FOCUS ON THE JOB IN HAND?


AFTER ALL, YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE A COUPLE OF MERCILESS HUNTING DOGS ...
RIGHT?
.. FROM THE FIREY PITS OF HADES ITSELF!
..mmuph..
NOT RICHARD AND BLEEDIN' JUDY!
SO HOW MUCH IS HE PAYING US FOR ALL THIS?
HOW MUCH?
I THOUGHT YOU'D MADE THE FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS ...
SO SHADOW .. HOW MUCH LONGER MUST WE WAIT?
BE PATIENT FRIEND
BECKY BURDOCK IS VERY CLEVER. RESOURCE - FUL
BUT THEN, IF SHE WASN'T, SHE WOULDN'T BE MUCH USE TO YOU.
WE HAVE FOUGHT FOR AN ETERNITY.
WE HAVE WAITED A LONG TIME.
HAVE A CARE SHADOW.
TIME IS RUNNING OUT.


JACK STAFF
SO.
WHAT HAPPENS NOW?
WHILST VISITING A DETATCHED HOUSE ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF CASTLETOWN, BRITAIN'S GREATEST HERO IS CONFRONTED BY HIS ARCH-FOE...
I TAKE IT YOU DIDN'T GET ME HERE FOR INTERIOR DESIGN ADVICE.
IS THIS SOME LAST CHANCE VENGANCE THING YOU'VE GOT GOING THEN?
YOU FINALLY GET YOUR OWN BACK FOR ALL THE YEARS I'VE FRUSTRATED YOUR CRIMINAL SCHEMES?
HA!
THE SPIDER
THIS CRIMINAL MASTER THIEF WAS LAST HEARD OVER TWENTY YEARS AGO. NOW HE'S BACK. BUT WHY?
REALLY MISTER SMITH.
IT'S A LITTLE BIT COMIC BOOKY DON'T YOU THINK?
RICH TEA OR BOURBON?

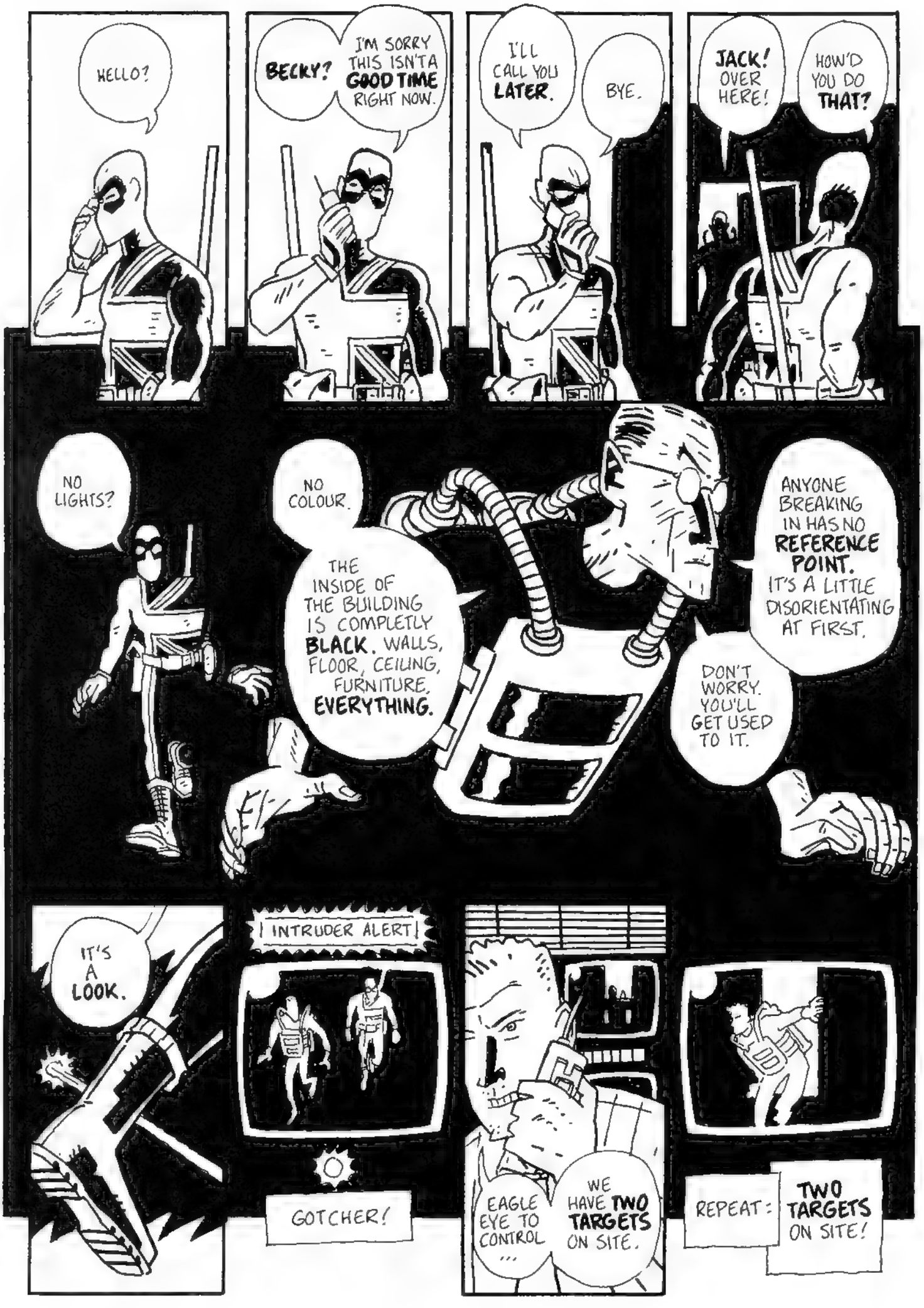

PERSONALLY I PREFER GARIBALDI.
"COMIC BOOKY?"
THIS FROM A MAN WITH POINTY TEETH AND HIS OWN SECRET UNDER-GROUND LAIR?
YOU MAY HAVE A POINT. BLAME IT ON THE EXCESSES OF YOUTH eh?
Y'KNOW I HAVEN'T BEEN DOWN HERE FOR YEARS ...
SO WHAT IS THIS ABOUT IF NOT REVENGE?
IT'S A LOT OF TROUBLE TO GO TO JUST TO GET NOSTALGIC ...
LIKE I SAID. I NEED YOUR HELP.
AFTER YOU JACK STAFF.
oh NO. NOT THIS TIME.
YOU GO FIRST.
OKAY
IF YOU THINK YOU CAN KEEP UP.

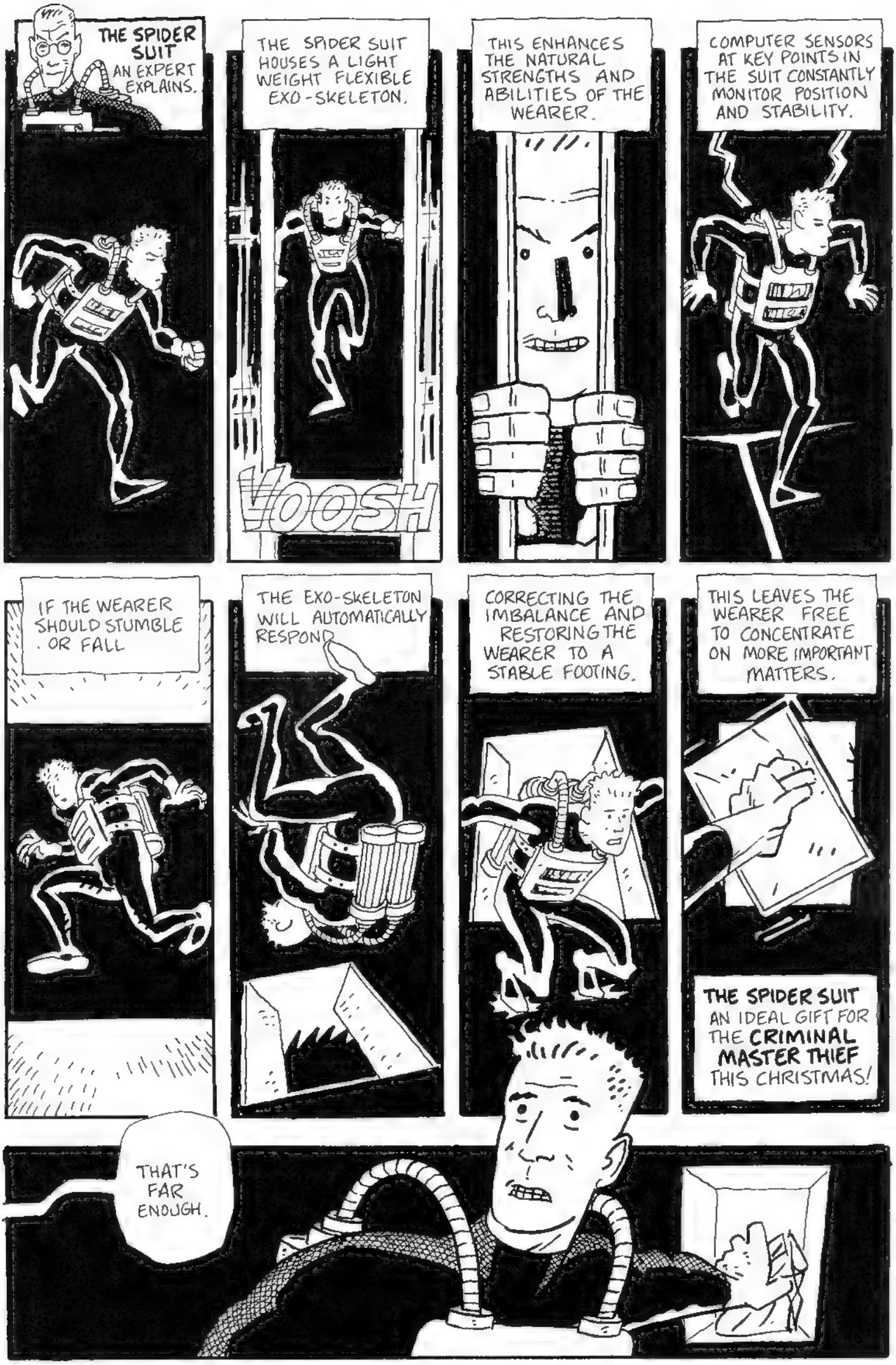

THIS HAD BETTER BE GOOD SPIDER.
THERE YOU ARE!
THIS IS A TAPE MADE BY A SECURITY CAMERA WHEN THE HOUSE WAS BROKEN INTO.
LIKE I SAID, I SAW THE BUGGER OFF, BUT NOT BEFORE HE'D HELPED HIMSELF TO A FEW 'ITEMS'
NOTHING I COULD GO TO THE POLICE ABOUT, OBVIOUSLY, SO I JUST LET IT GO.
IT WASN'T UNTIL I SAW THE NEWS THE FOLLOWING WEEK THAT I REALISED THAT HE'D TAKEN SOME-THING ELSE.
A SEEMINGLY IMPOSSIBLE BURGLARY HAS BEEN COMMITED, REMINDING PEOPLE OF THE 1960'S MASTER THIEF, THE SPIDER.
HE'D TAKEN ONE OF THE ORIGINAL SPIDER SUITS. I WAS ABLE TO TRACK HIM DOWN TO ONE OF HIS CRIMES, BUT TOO LATE.
THE LATEST SPIDER CRIME HAS ENDED IN TRAGEDY AFTER A MAN WAS KILLED LAST NIGHT.
HE WAS TOO QUICK, OR MAYBE I'M GETTING OLD.
HE'S A DANGEROUS MAN. THE SPIDER SUIT MAKES HIM MORE SO.
HE HAS TO BE STOPPED.
AND?
I NEED YOUR HELP JACK.
WHAT? WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I'M GOING TO HELP YOU SPIDER?
BECAUSE YOU CAN. BECAUSE I NEVER SHOT ANYONE.
BECAUSE IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO.
WHAT DO YOU SAY JACK?


Today is my LUCKY DAY.
According to my HOROSCOPE that is.
Maybe it was right after all.
Not that I BELIEVE that SUPERSTICIOUS CLAPTRAP, you understand?
I'm a HARD-NOSED-NO-NONSENSE reporter.
But then I didn't believe in VAMPIRES either.
Another EXCLUSIVE REPORT from
BECKY BURDOCK VAMPIRE REPORTER
Okay, so I'm being chased through a graveyard by a pair of dogs called the HOUNDS of HELL...
At least they haven't caught me yet.
EEEK! EEK!
What? A MOUSE?
I was SCARED of a mouse?
EEK?
Poor thing - it's more scared of me.
It's okay - come here little one.
I know what it's like to be scared.
Just a little CLOSER now.
I'm feeling a little
--HUNGRY--
--NO!
NO! NO! NO! What am I DOING?
Sometimes I scare MYSELF.


Damn. Damn. Damn.
Wait a minute. I KNOW a SUPER HERO. And not just any hero.
BRITAIN'S GREATEST.
And he OWES me.
HEY! IT'S ME. BECKY BURDOCK.
BIG TIME.
TELL ME ABOUT IT -- LOOK I ...
DON'T YOU DARE HANG UP.
DON'T YOU
DAMN.
Okay - things are a little quiet now.
Perhaps they've found a bone to dig up.
Maybe I could make a run for it.
After all, today is my LUCKY DAY.
BOO!
In the distance, the Church clock strikes MIDNIGHT.
Damn.


WILL JACK STAFF AND THE SPIDER GET CAUGHT IN THE:
I HAVE NEVER SEEN A MORE OBVIOUS SET-UP.
'SPIDER' THEFT FOILED!
BY A STAFF REPORTER
Following the recent spate of thefts attributed to the Criminal Master-thief of the 1960's, The Spider, Millionaire Claude Rimbau has deposited the priceless 'Rainbow Diamonds' in the Eisner Securities building on Der Street. "I'd like to see the try anything now," said
COME ON.
UNIT D WERE MORE SUBTLE THAN THIS.
WHAT MAKES YOU SO SURE YOUR LITTLE THIEF IS GOING TO TRY AND STEAL WHAT IS CLEARLY JUST BAIT?
BECAUSE HE CAN.
I WOULD
WHAT WAS THAT SPIDER?
SPIDER?
RING RING


HELLO?
BECKY?
I'M SORRY THIS ISN'T A GOOD TIME RIGHT NOW.
I'LL CALL YOU LATER.
BYE.
JACK! OVER HERE!
HOW'D YOU DO THAT?
NO LIGHTS?
NO COLOUR.
THE INSIDE OF THE BUILDING IS COMPLETLY BLACK. WALLS, FLOOR, CEILING, FURNITURE, EVERYTHING.
ANYONE BREAKING IN HAS NO REFERENCE POINT. IT'S A LITTLE DISORIENTATING AT FIRST.
DON'T WORRY. YOU'LL GET USED TO IT.
IT'S A LOOK.
INTRUDER ALERT
GOTCHER!
EAGLE EYE TO CONTROL ...
WE HAVE TWO TARGETS ON SITE.
REPEAT:
TWO TARGETS ON SITE!

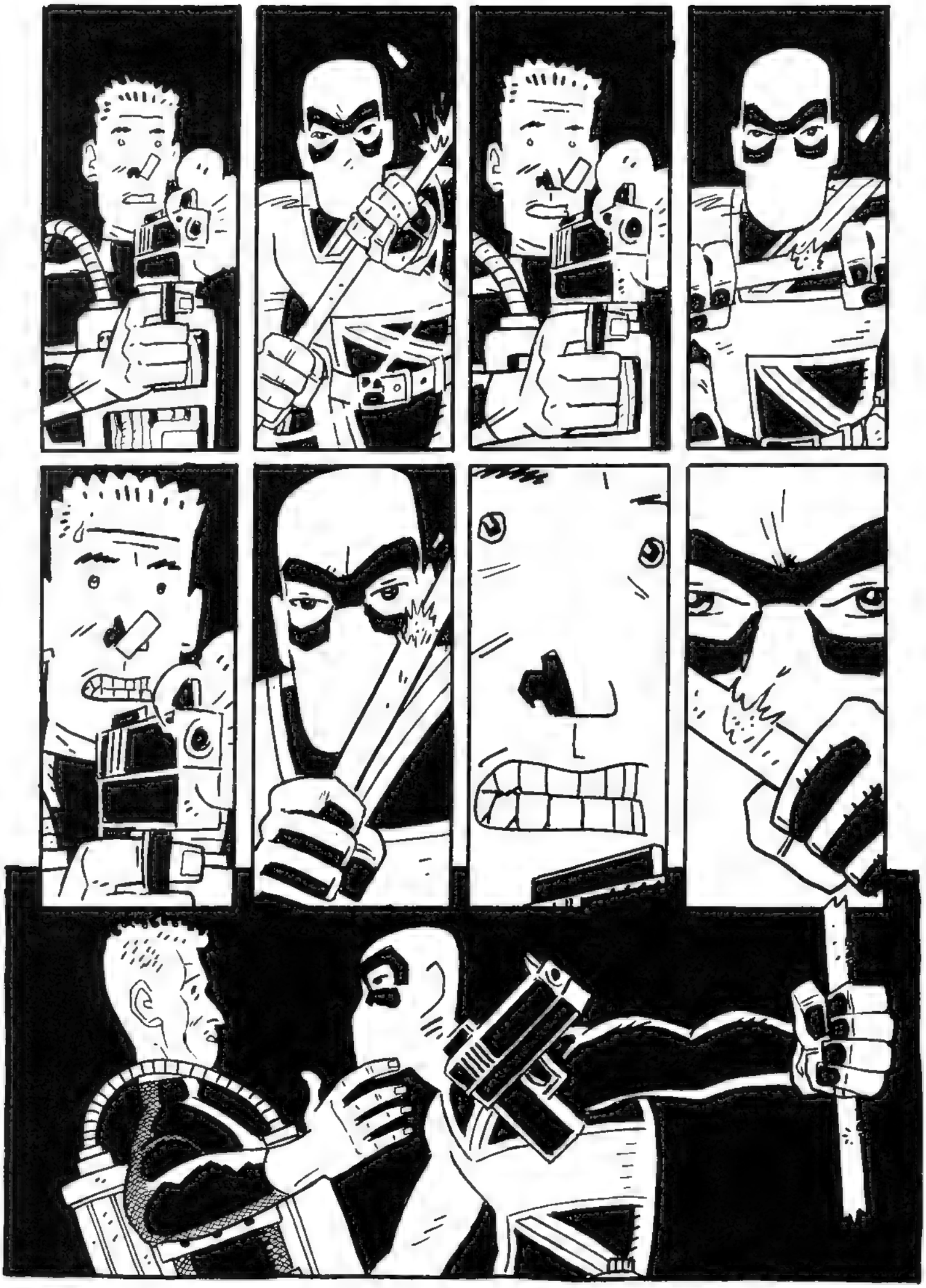

THE SPIDER SUIT
AN EXPERT EXPLAINS.
THE SPIDER SUIT HOUSES A LIGHT WEIGHT FLEXIBLE EXO-SKELETON.
VOOSH
THIS ENHANCES THE NATURAL STRENGTHS AND ABILITIES OF THE WEARER.
COMPUTER SENSORS AT KEY POINTS IN THE SUIT CONSTANTLY MONITOR POSITION AND STABILITY.
IF THE WEARER SHOULD STUMBLE . OR FALL
THE EXO-SKELETON WILL AUTOMATICALLY RESPOND
CORRECTING THE IMBALANCE AND RESTORING THE WEARER TO A STABLE FOOTING.
THIS LEAVES THE WEARER FREE TO CONCENTRATE ON MORE IMPORTANT MATTERS.
THE SPIDER SUIT AN IDEAL GIFT FOR THE CRIMINAL MASTER THIEF THIS CHRISTMAS!
THAT'S FAR ENOUGH.


PUT THEM DOWN.
THE ONLY THING GOING DOWN HERE IS YOU MISTER!
SPIDER


My father taught me all he knows.
THE ONLY GOOD VAMPIRE IS A DEAD ONE!
DON'T THINK YOU CAN TRY YOUR MIST TRICK AGAIN
ONCE BITTEN TWICE SHY eh?
PREFERABLY WITH THE HEAD CHOPPED OFF AND THE REST OF THE BODY THROWN ON THE FIRE!
BRAMBLE & SON
VAMPIRE HUNTER
HI!
YAH!
But all my father knows is hate and killing.
HAROLD?
He doesn't understand the gentle things that life has to offer.
The soothing caress upon a furrowed brow.
oof!
My father will never understand me.


RUN BECKY! RUN!!
I THINK WE'VE LOST THEM BECKY ...
REALLY ?
THEY DIDN'T LOOK THE TYPE TO GIVE UP EASILY.
THEY DIDN'T. THEY'VE DONE THEIR JOB.
THEY BROUGHT YOU TO ME.
WHAT ? YOU ?
WHAT-- WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?
ME ? I'M JUST A SHADOW OF THE MAN I WAS.
NOW, IF YOU DON'T MIND, I HAVE SOME UNFINISHED BUSINESS WITH MS. BURDOCK ...
PRIVATE BUSINESS.
THIS GIRL IS UNDER MY PROTECTION ...
HEY! LESS OF THE GIRL ...
AND IF YOU WANT HER SOUL-- YOU'LL HAVE TO ANSWER TO ME-- HAROLD BRAMBLE!


YOU KILLED THE SPIDER
YOU!
SO? HE WAS JUST AN OLD GUY. WHO CARES?
HE SHOULDN'T HAVE GOT IN THE WAY.
YOU WALK AWAY NOW--
IF YOU DON'T WANT THE SAME THING!
TRY IT.




THAT OLD GUY DESIGNED THAT OUTFIT YOU'RE WEARING. HE KNEW IT'S STRENGTHS AND ALSO ITS WEAKNESSES
AND HE TOLD ME JUST WHAT THEY ARE.
FOR INSTANCE THE EXO-SKELETON NEEDS A HEAVY DUTY POWER SOURCE.
THAT MEANS A LOT OF HEAT.
NOW IF THE COOLANT WAS DIS-CONNECTED ...
OOPS.
WELL, THE WHOLE THING WOULD PROBABLY OVERHEAT AND PACK IN.
BZZT!
CLAP CLAP
oh WELL DONE JACK!
BRAVO!
WELL, YOU DIDN'T THINK YOU'D GET RID OF ME THAT EASILY..
DID YOU JACK?


REINFORCED WIRE MESH. BETTER THAN A BULLET PROOF VEST.
KNOCKED THE WIND OUT OF MY SAILS THOUGH.
STILL, LOOKS LIKE YOU DID ALRIGHT eh?
COMPANY
WHAT DO YOU MEAN YOU CAN'T OPEN THE DOOR?
THE LOCK'S BEEN JAMMED SIR...

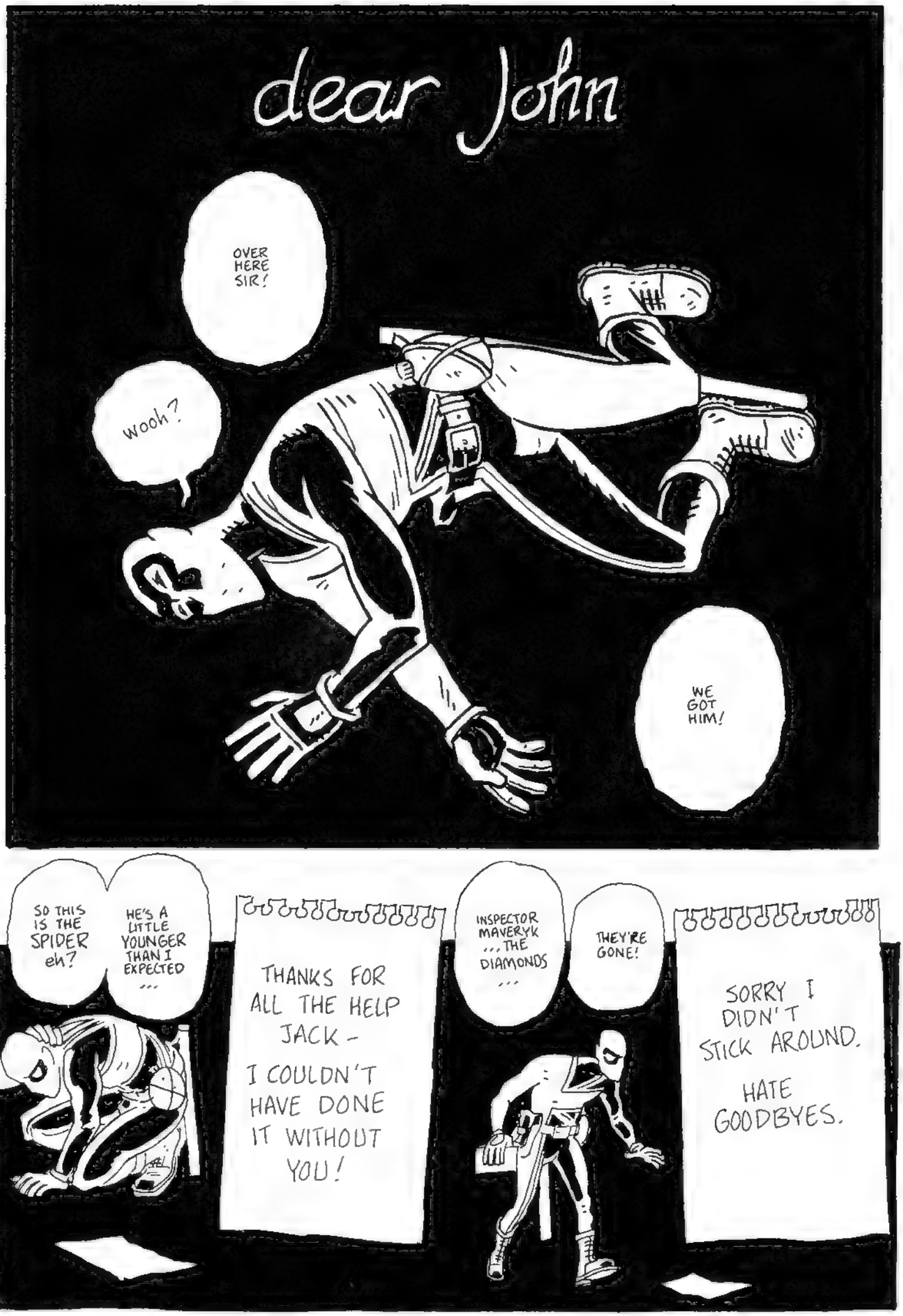

hm?
WE'D BETTER MAKE A MOVE ...
BEFORE THE POLICE START ASKING TOO MANY AWKWARD QUESTIONS.


YOU'RE RIGHT JACK.
TIME TO GO!


Y'KNOW SOME THING hmm?
I'D FORGOTTEN JUST HOW MUCH FUN THIS COULD BE.
DON'T JUST STAND THERE ... BREAK THE BLEEDIN' DOOR DOWN ...


THAT'S THE THING ABOUT DOING THIS
AFTER A WHILE YOU'VE SEEN IT ALL. THERE'S NO MORE SUPRISES ANYMORE
A MAN OF STRAW
AND THEN SOMETHING LIKE THIS HAPPENS--
--YOU'LL HAVE TO ANSWER TO ME-- HAROLD BRAMBLE!
EXCUSE ME?
SOUL?
DID YOU JUST SAY SOUL?
HA HA HA HA
HE'S SOME KIND OF VAMPIRE HUNTER.
I DON'T EXPECT THERE'S MUCH OF A LIVING IN THAT.
DRESSES LIKE A RAG AND BONE MAN.
YOU REALLY BELIEVE THAT, DON'T YOU HAROLD?
I CAN CALL YOU HAROLD CAN'T I?
YOU THINK THIS IS SOME SIMPLISTIC MORAL TALE OF GOOD AND EVIL, DON'T YOU?
RIGHT AND WRONG.
RIGHT?
WELL, I DO ...


HA!
I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR LUXURIES LIKE THAT!
THIS IS A WAR!
SHE'S THE IMPORTANT ONE.
AND YOU-- BECKY BURDOCK --
YOU'VE JUST BECOME A SOLDIER!
WHAT? DON'T I GET A CHOICE ABOUT THIS?
EVEN IF SHE DOESN'T KNOW IT YET.
CHOICE? THE ONLY CHOICE YOU HAVE IS THIS...
WHICH SIDE DO YOU STAND WITH?
"SOULS" HAHAHA!
I CAN'T BELIEVE HE ACTUALLY SAID THAT!
THE NEXT TIME WE MEET, YOU EITHER FIGHT WITH ME OR AGAINST ME.
CHOOSE QUICKLY ...
I'M GOING TO HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE.
I'M CRACKING UP!
"SOULS"
HA HA HA HA HA!
"CHOOSE CAREFULLY"
I USED TO BELIEVE IN SOULS TOO.
HA HA HA HA HA!


dear John
OVER HERE SIR!
WOOH?
WE GOT HIM!
SO THIS IS THE SPIDER eh?
HE'S A LITTLE YOUNGER THAN I EXPECTED ...
THANKS FOR ALL THE HELP JACK -
I COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOU!
INSPECTOR MAVERYK ... THE DIAMONDS ...
THEY'RE GONE!
SORRY I DIDN'T STICK AROUND.
HATE GOODBYES.


EVERY ONE SPREAD OUT ...
TWO PEOPLE BROKE INTO THIS BUILDING,
I'VE LEFT THE 'RAINBOW DIAMONDS' IN YOUR SAFE - KEEPING.
I WANT JUNIORS LITTLE ACCOMPLICE ...
AND DON'T FEEL YOU HAVE TO BE TOO GENTLE ABOUT IT--
oh - AND ABOUT THAT 'REVENGE' BUSINESS ...
P.T.O.
OY! CHUMMY!
I LIED
THAT'S FAR ENOUGH!

STAFF POST

DANCING ELEPHANT PRESS
P.O.BOX 2362, WELLS, BASIYQ, ENGLAND
e-mail : danceleph@aol.com

Mr. Grist,

Just finished reading Jack Staff # 6. It's another great issue, of course, but it was colored by the announcement that you're bringing Kane (the series) to a close. I've been a fan for a good number of years now (I think I started reading around issue 10), and it's one of the few comics I think stands out in today's market.

Of course, I'm extremely excited that you'll continue to do Kane books. I really do prefer comic Books with the capital B these days, rather than episodic tales. I hope the new format is rewarding for you, creatively and financially.

And of course, I'll continue to pick up Jack Staff. I never know what to expect with that book -- and that's a good thing! It's a bit all over the place, bouncing around from character to character, which is half of the charm. There are more ideas and playful "tweaks" of comic-book convention in any issue of this comic than in any dozen others.

Keep writing and drawing. I'll keep reading.

John Platt
Plattzine@worldnet.att.net

Dear Mr Grist

I have just picked up Jack Staff 6. I really enjoyed it, as usual, but as you develop your character it gets better every issue. It is nice to see the spider back again. In my youth he was one of my favourite characters. He had a very American feel and he was a villain, very daring for its day. In fact I cannot think of another criminal hero. Did you have to get permission to use the character or is he past his copyright?

I am sad to see Kane go. I have enjoyed his adventures from the off, but I suppose that if he is not selling then he must go the way of all comics. I even tried to boost your sales by giving Kane a plug in the BJGP, but there cannot be a lot of comic buying GPs out there.

Keep up the good work with Jack Staff

Chris Johnstone
Christopher.johnstone@ntlworld.com

***Okay, I stole the Spider, but that's just between me and you, okay? If anybody asks, it's* homage.**

I've been a fan of your work since the first issue of Kane. Getting a copy in Boston hasn't always been easy, but well worth the effort. The announcement of the series end -- in Jack Staff 6 -- was saddening statement of the worldwide comics audience inability to support this offbeat title.

At the same time, one editorial frustration is this: you jerked us around for 31 issues without resolving the issue between Kane and his partner Dennis Harvey. Reading that you'll put out the new collections every year-and-a-half (in your spare time) isn't very reassuring.

With your next planned Kane volume, I urge you to show us exactly what happened in that bathroom where Harvey was killed. Wrap up all the loose ends, and bring the series to a con clusion. That way, if you do decide to pick it up again, you can do so with a fresh start. And if you never write or draw a Kane story again, you won't join the long list of other cartoonists who've let us down*.

Dave Marshall
Dsm@illdave.com

* Graveyard of Dead Series (off the top of my head on an early Friday morning) Jim Steranko: Talon Joe Kubert: The Redeemer Alan Moore: 1963

The relationship between Kane and Dennis Harvey is, for me, one of the key elements of the series, and I'm not intending wrapping it up as quickly as you might want. Had I continued with the comic, I wouldn't have been getting round to revealing exactly what happened in the locker room until around issue 60 or so!

The dynamics of writing a book are different to those of a bimonthly comic, so the storyline will be a bit more focussed than it may sometimes have appeared in the comic. It will still be a little while before I get there, but I do promise to resolve everything in time. Trust me. I'm a cartoonist. It's hardly fair to lump me in with the likes of Steranko, Kubert or Moore now is it?

Hey Mr.Grist...

I read the "Important Announcement" about Kane last night as I cracked open my latest copy of Jack Staff. I just wanted to express my disappointment and frustration about the sales situation with the Kane comic book and let you know that you have my continued support for any and all projects that you plan to do in the future.

I've been with Kane since #1 and have tried in my small way to spread the word how great this book is. In fact, I was (up to very recently) a regular columnist for the entertainment magazine for the city I live in - Evansville, IN - and was responsible for starting up a comic book review column. And whenever we did year-end wrap-ups I always listed Kane in my top ten of the year list.

I turn 43 this month and have been a comic book fan before I could even read properly. I love this neglected medium through-and-through but there's only so much of guys running around in underwear beating each other up I can take. So most of my favorites are stuff by the Fantagraphics gang, Drawn & Quarterly folks, D. Sim, etc. It's almost a crime that your work gets so overlooked by the comic book press and fans alike since it's such a great combination of action/adventure and character stories done with such pushing-the-envelope style of comic book writing and artwork (did that make any sense?). Though one should probably stay away from snap summations, I've attempted to describe your work on Kane as a modern day (new wave?!) Eisner. (Of course, the fact Eisner is still alive and doing vital work still might not be the best shorthand description to use?!?). Mainly I evoke Eisner because it seems to me what he was doing with The Spirit - breaking new artistic ground with all types of story genres - you seem to be doing with Kane (and it helps that both are essentially crime/police stories in a very atmospheric city with a series title named after the (most of the time) main character.

Well...anyway...I'm rambling way too much here (plus, I'm doing this at work) so I'll shut up for now and just end here by saying that no matter what you put out in the future, I'll be there and I'll also do my best to preach the world of Grist to all the un-enlightened comic book fans I bump into.

Thanks for your artistry.....

TED HAYCRAFT!!!
Hughtilford@yahoo.com

A long overdue thankyou to all those people who have helped spread the word over the years - don't stop now!!

Paul,

I was very sorry to read, in the newest Jack Staff (#6), that Kane #31 is the last issue of that fine comic book. I've been with you for all of Jack Staff, but somehow had never discovered Kane (And I call myself a

comic collector, sheesh!). Needless to say, I enjoy Jack Staff, so I went looking for back issues of Kane. So you were correct, Jack did bring in a few new readers for Kane, but obviously not enough.

The problem I've had is finding back issues for Kane. There doesn't seem to be very many available, so against my collector's grain, I bought the first two book collections and have been able to pick up a run of Kane starting with #9 through #16, then sporadic issues through the current, and sadly last, issue #31. I guess I'll have to wait for a convention to be able to fill in my run and complete the series. And depending on the cost, may just pick up the first eight issues, as well, in their original configuration.

As much as I enjoy super-heroes, it's nice to read a comic set in another genre, such as Kane. Though I will admit to sometimes having a bit of trouble understanding Oscar Darke's "language" and more often than not, found myself saying "his lines" out loud, so that I could figure them out. But that actually made the comic more interesting to me! You'd think with the inroads that CrossGen has been making with a complete line of non-super-hero comic books that more people would be able to embrace a book like Kane. Oh well, their loss!

I think the problem is finding the books though. The comic shop I buy from only carries the "mainstream" comics and I have to order everything that is "off the wall" through them from Previews. Not a problem when you already are familiar with a book, but not so good when you don't know anything about the book or the creators, etc. I do shop at another comic shop that carries a lot of independent comics and that is where I discovered Jack Staff originally, but they do not provide the level of service of the other shop, so I only visit there every couple of weeks looking for independent books, then order them from my regular shop, which I had been doing with both Jack Staff & Kane.

But I've gone on way to long, so just let me say that I enjoy your writing and art, Paul and will support you in continuing to buy Jack Staff & also with the planned Kane books and with anything else you choose to publish, as long as I find out about it. So good luck and keep putting your visions on paper for our enjoyment.

Greg Turner
Gregturner@mediaone.net

Your problem with selling single issues as opposed to collected books is one of those self destructive ideas that I have noticed with good artist/writers that do their own books. Everyone that is a fan or a potential fan sees that you collect several issues in bound books. Those books are a lot more inviting to new readers and fans alike because of instant gratification. You get the whole story at once. Plus, there is the all too common burn that readers have gotten wise to, when you collect single issues and months later are greeted at you local comic shop by the "collected" book. The book comes with extra pages and bonus sketches and production art ! And guess what? It costs less than all of those single issues, not to mention the obvious fact that it is bound nice and neat in one book.

I've never bought a 'single' Kane issue but I have all of the bound books. A lot of readers are going through the same thing with great books like HELLBOY ... (bound Mignola-always better) and short series' like Universe X (who needs the cliffhangers 30 days apart?). We know damn well that they are going to be collected and we'll be stuck with flimsy single issues. (and stop trying to trick us into buying the same comic twice) So we are waiting now.

I suspect that we will get burned again with Jack Staff... but as readers we don't know if that book will be collected yet. So we are buying the single issues for now.

Face facts, if you were a bad artist or a bad writer it wouldn't be important for readers to have all of your issues at once. Who would pay over 10 bucks for collected issues of crap. (I have paid 2.99 for it though--remember when X - MEN didn't suck?)

DEMOCITY@aol.com

ps :give us a timetable. I hate seeing the same Paul Grist books that I already have (or am waiting to be collected in a book) sitting there not knowing when or if J. Staff is coming out.

The way I see it, the collected books serve as a way of keeping all the issues of a series in print and available for new readers.

The truth is that if a comic doesn't sell well in a single issue format then there will never be a collected book. I appreciate that some people may buy both the comic and the books. Maybe they want to show their support for the comic, maybe they want a chance to re-read the series without having to get out all the comics or maybe they like the way they look on the shelves. I also know that not everyone wants to do that or can afford to do that. That's fine.

I'm not trying to trick anyone into buying the same comic twice, and I'm not out to burn you by putting out some thing better a few months later. I do not load up the collections with 'extras' so nobody who buys the comic has to buy the book or miss out on a major story twist. In fact, by buying only the book, you've missed out on free signed prints, postcards and comics which have been available to readers of the comic.

You want a timetable? Okay here it is - Kane book 5, The Untouchable Rico Costas and The Blind Man (collecting Kane 19 -21 which were first published in 1998) will be out in March 2001. It contains no previously unpublished material and, at $12.95 US or £7.20 UK, will cost you slightly more than the single individual issues.

Oh, and next time you write, please use your name. Anonymous e-mail just comes across as so unfriendly.

Dear Tom Tom the Robotman:

Tonight I am a happy camper, I got to watch Flixmix - Boogiemen: The Killer Compilation in which infamous boogiemen like Chucky, Fisherman, Jason Voorhees all come together. After the movie, I topped it off with dessert. That dessert was Jack Staff #5!

I loved the heck out of Detective Harry Crane, this former policeman is able to see things that other people can't see. He is perfect for a homicide investigation. I thought at anytime he was going to say..."I see dead people", but he didn't go that route. Shades of the X-Files, I'm talking about Question Mark Crimes. Crimes that are unusual and takes more than normal police investigation.

I got a real creepy feeling knowing that there are occult artifacts in this reality that can cause death. I must say that this comic book just gets better and better! Keep up the great work!

Paul Dale Roberts, Production Constable
Jazma Universe Online!
http://www.jazmaonline.com/

BACK ISSUES

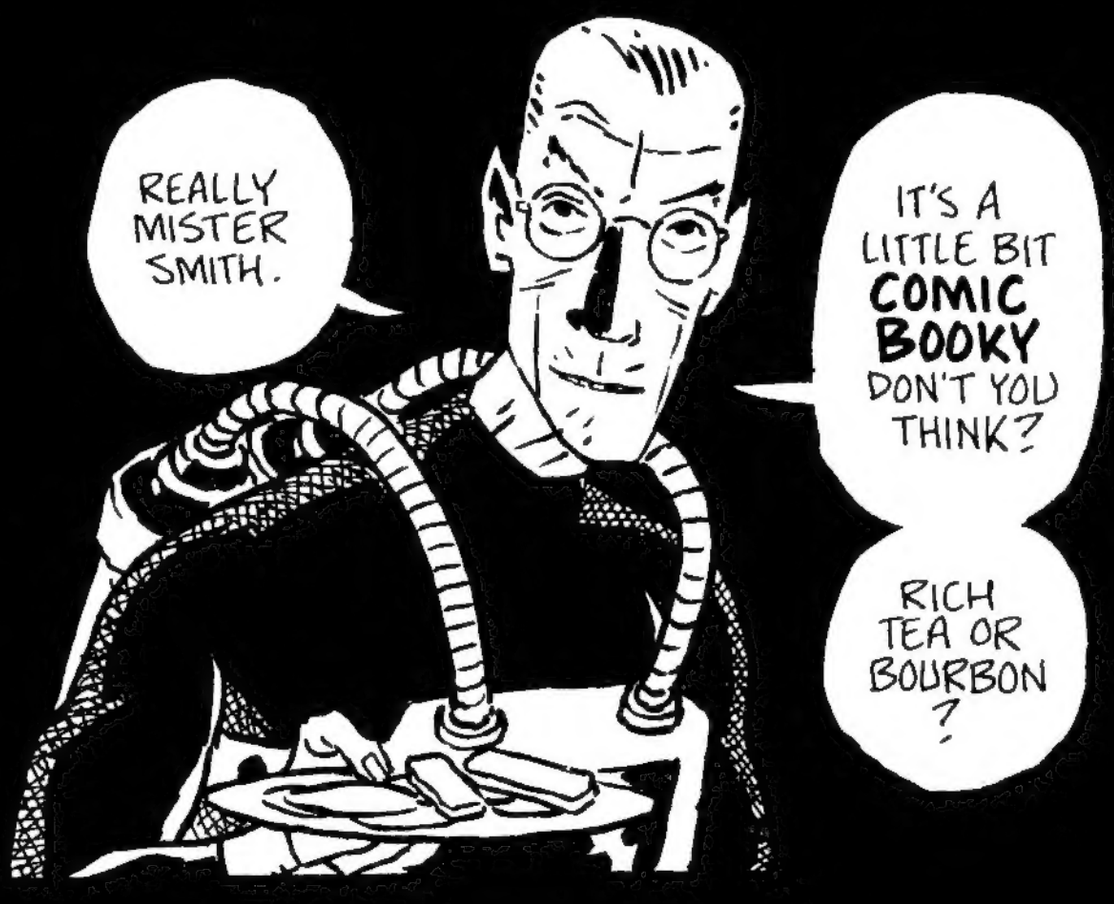
$2.95 US £1.80 UK £2.50 Europe
Prices per single copy, US orders please add $1.50 US to the total to cover postage

ORIGINAL ART FOR SALE

I'm still selling the original pages from Jack Staff. Single pages are available at £50 UK, $85 US each (price includes postage). Colour pages and covers are not yet available. Please list alternatives in case your first choice has gone (or contact me via e-mail if you want to check and/or reserve a page. As always, please make cheques etc payable to Paul Grist.

NEXT ISSUE

A special all Q issue as Jack Staff gets recruited and joins the hunt for the Jigsaw Man. More pages! More colour! More money! All this and more in Jack Staff 8!


REALLY MISTER SMITH.
IT'S A LITTLE BIT COMIC BOOKY DON'T YOU THINK?
RICH TEA OR BOURBON?